

Winter 2016
Carleton University
Department of Political Science

PECO 5502 W (Selected Problems in Political Economy II)

Also listed as SOCI 5505, PSCI 5502

The Political Economy of Social Change

Thurs. 14:35 - 17:25

Dunton Tower 1524

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Course Description

There certainly exists a surplus of academic writing on the malignancies of the current order from its layers of exploitations and oppressions through its disgraceful inequalities to its glaring environmental non-sustainability. There is also interest of late in the global growth and interlinking of protest movements. But there is a paucity of attention being devoted to the morning after question? If either progressive political movements accede to power or current regimes (as odious as many are) vaporize, then what? Surely it is time for progressive policy actors, activists, dissidents, forward looking graduate students to begin to think seriously about future directed social change. This course does precisely that: it moves from questions of from where substantive knowledge of human material reproduction derives to those of how such knowledge can be put to making a progressive, economically viable, redistributive, eco-sustainable future of human flourishing.

Students are encouraged to think creatively about how social change may be brought about in the here and now. Such creative thinking is necessarily foregrounded in critique of the narrow framing of social alternatives in terms of soviet-style state centralized planning and “the market”. The course critically examines a variety of new alternatives on offer from socialists, greens, feminists, anarchists and others. It concludes by asking the question whether even if it is accepted that viable progressive alternatives do exist is a road open to get there?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation.....20%
Presentations..... 40 %
Final course essay....40%
Total.....100%

Required Text:

Richard Westra, *Exit from Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2015) paperback edition.

January 7. Introduction: No Way Out?

Exit from Globalization chapter 1

Robert Albritton, “A Phase of Transition Away From Capitalism”, in Richard Westra, Dennis Badeen and Robert Albritton (eds.) *The Future of Capitalism After the Financial Crisis: The Varieties of Capitalism Debate in the Age of Austerity*: Frontiers of Political Economy Series (London: Routledge, 2015).

[Following discussion, time to be devoted to choosing presentation topics]

January 14. Soviet-style socialism and Marx’s Legacy

Exit from Globalization chapters 2 and 3.

Robin Blackburn, “Fin de Siècle: Socialism after the Crash”, *New Left Review*, I/185 (1991).

Peter Hudis, *Marx’s Concept of the Alternative to Capitalism* (Leiden: Brill, 2012) selected chapters.

January 21. Economic Principles Beyond “State” and “Market”

David Graeber, *Debt: The First 5000 Years* (New York: Melville House, 2012) chapter 5.

Kojin Karatani, *The Structure of World History: From Modes of Production to Modes of Exchange* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014) Introduction and 10.

Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957) chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Recommended reading:

K. William Kapp, *The Social Costs of Private Enterprise* (New York: Schocken, 1975) selected chapters.

January 28 & February 4. Climate Change Ultimatum: The Reform of Capitalism

Response

Exit from Globalization chapter 4

Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014).

James Gustave Speth, *The Bridge at the Edge of the World: Capitalism, the Environment, and Crossing from Crisis to Sustainability* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) chapters 6, 7, 8, 11.

Richard Heinberg, *The End of Growth: Adapting to Our New Economic Reality* (Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 2011) chapters 6 and 7.

Bill McKibben, *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future* (New York: Henry Holt and Company) chapters 3 and 4.

David C. Korten, *Agenda for a New Economy: From Phantom Wealth to Real Wealth* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2009) chapters 10, 11 and 12.

February 11. Climate Change Ultimatum: Ecosocialist Response

John Bellamy Foster, Brett Clark and Richard York, *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism’s War on the Earth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010) selectively, chapters 17 and 18.

Chris Williams, *Ecology and Socialism: Solutions to Capitalist Ecological Crisis* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2010) selectively, chapters 7 and 8.

Paul Burkett, *Marx and Nature: A Red and Green Perspective* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2014) chapters 11, 12, 13, 14.

Recommended reading:

Richard Smith, “Green Capitalism: The God That Failed”, *Truthout*, January 9 2014,

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/21060-green-capitalism-the-god-that-failed>.

February 25. Feminist, LGBT Progressive Futures

Karin Schonpflug, *Feminism, Economics and Utopia: Time Travelling through Paradigms* (London: Routledge, 2008) selected chapters.

Sherry Wolf, *Sexuality and Socialism: History, Politics, and Theory of LGBT Liberation* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2009) selected chapters.

Julie Matthaei and Barbara Brandt, “The Transformative Moment”, in Robert Albritton, Bob Jessop and Richard Westra (eds.) *Political Economy and Global Capitalism: The 21st Century, Present and Future* (London: Anthem, 2010).

Recommended reading:

Johanna Brenner, “21st Century Socialist-Feminism”, *Socialist Studies*, 10, 1 (2014)

<http://socialiststudies.com/article/view/23486/17371>

March 3. Confederalism and Community: An Anarchist Future

Murray Bookchin, *Remaking Society: Pathways to a Green Future* (Boston: South End Press, 1990) pp. 95-204.

Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The emergence and dissolution of hierarchy* (Oakland: AK Press, 2005) chapter 12.

David Graeber, *The Democracy Project* (London: Allen Lane, 2013) chapters 4 and 5.

Recommended reading:

David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso: 2012) chapters 3 and 5.

March 10. Socialism Back to the Future with Markets

Exit from Globalization, chapter 5.

David Schweickart, *After Capitalism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002) chapters 1, 3 and 5.

Geoffrey M. Hodgson, “Socialism against markets? A critique of two recent proposals”, *Economy and Society*, 27, 4 (1998).

Fikret Adaman and Pat Devine, “Participatory planning as a deliberative democratic process: a response to Hodgson’s critique”, *Economy and Society*, 30, 2 (2001).

Recommended reading:

Geoffrey M. Hodgson, “The limits to participatory planning: a reply to Adaman and Devine”, *Economy and Society*, 34, 1 (2005).

March 17. Are there Real Utopias, Socialist or Otherwise?

Exit from Globalization, chapter 6.

Eric Olin Wright, *Envisioning Real Utopias* (London: Verso, 2010) chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Gar Alperovitz, *What Then Must We do?* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green, 2013) parts 2 to 7.

March 24. There must be Some Way Out of Here?

Exit from Globalization, chapter 7.

Eric Olin Wright, *Envisioning Real Utopias*, chapters 8, 9, 10, 11.

Leo Panitch, Greg Albo and Vivek Chibber (eds.) *The Question of Strategy: Socialist Register 2013* (Pontypool: Merlin Press) chapters by Greg Albo, Hilary Wainwright and Johanna Brenner/Nancy Holmstrom.

March 31 & April 7. Conclusion: Presentations of Final Essay Topics